



STATE OF ARKANSAS
**BUREAU OF
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH**

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November 25, 2013

Dear Judges,

The Chairs of the Personnel Committee (Senator Uvalde Lindsey and Representative Andrea Lea) have requested that I contact you to keep you informed of the Personnel Committee's interim study of the employment and funding structure of trial court assistants and court reporters.

The committee has met twice to discuss this interim study proposal and plans to meet again on December 18th at 1pm in Room 171 of the Capitol. Originally, the meeting was planned for December 4th but conflicts have necessitated a change in date and time.

The committee has reviewed the preliminary findings, information gathered from the court reporter and trial court assistant surveys, the Administration of Justice (AOJ) Fund allocations and shortfalls, and comments and recommendations from the Judicial Council representatives.

Based on the recommendation from the Judicial Council representatives that all trial court assistants and court reporters be moved out of the AOJ Fund and into General Revenue or State Central Services, the Chairs have requested that the Judicial Council prepare and present a detailed plan and process for moving these two classifications – to include funding sources, costs, processes, and structure. The Department of Finance and Administration has been requested to attend the next meeting as well and provide a response to the committee regarding the Judicial recommendation.

Based on the comments and requests from the judicial representatives as well as letters sent to the Bureau requesting increases for court employees, the Chairs have asked the Judicial Council and the Administrative Office of the Courts to provide some criteria that they would like to see used as a basis for reviewing salaries for trial court assistants and court reporters - if that becomes a task the committee plans to take on.

Additionally, a breakdown of the caseload for each Circuit Judge by case type (Criminal, Civil, Juvenile, etc) has been requested. This information should include a quantifiable definition for each case type. This will help determine how to weigh the different types of cases. If a review of salaries is undertaken, this data has been considered for possible use as criteria in the review.

Circuit Judges
November 25, 2013
Page 2

The Chairs also encourage all judges wishing to make comments or suggestions about establishing criteria or the removal of trial court assistants and court reporters from the AOJ fund to please do so.

If you have any questions or suggestions you would like to provide to the committee, please feel free to contact me at 501-537-9108 or robinsont@blr.arkansas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Robinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tony Robinson
Administrator, Personnel Review
Bureau of Legislative Research